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WILD HORSES

From the New York Tribune

Wild horses by the thousands are overrunning the government National Forests of Nevada and neighboring states, and the authorities in Washington are beset with petitions from stockmen and farmers begging them to put a stop to the nuisance. A recent dispatch from Reno conveyed the intelligence that there are fifteen thousand of the untamed beasts upon the Toiyabe, Toiyabe and Monitor forest reserves in Lander county alone, and that orders have been received by the forest rangers to begin a systematic war of extermination upon them. This dispatch, although twisted as to facts, does not exaggerate the number of horses now supposed to be roaming at large in the districts mentioned. As a matter of probable truth there are a good many more than fifteen thousand wild horses in Nevada and the neighboring states, and every herd is a pest to the owners of vegetation and domestic stock.

The part of the Reno telegram which is not true is that relating to the orders sent from Washington. Neither the forest rangers nor any other employees of the government have been told to destroy the horses, and unless they do receive such orders they will confine their energies to fencing crops from the trespassing animals or rounding them up when they appear and threaten damage to the range. Indeed, if half the stories brought to the capital are true, all the rangers in Uncle Sam's service would have little chance of destroying the big herds that are roaming over the Western states.

Within the last few years they have increased to such an extent that in many localities they are classed as "varmints," with wolves, wildcats, and grizzlies, and every man's rifle is turned against them. No fence is strong enough to stop these horses, and when they appear in force they have been known to knock down and kill cows and calves. After each visitation from a herd the ranchman is likely to mourn the loss of his domestic horses, and it requires only a few days' association with their new companions for the best broken animals to become as wild as their nomadic comrades.

A study of the wild horse problem brings to light many interesting facts about the animals. The Legislature of Nevada, it seems, passed a law many years ago specifically allowing hunters to shoot wild horses and to sell their hides for what they could get in the open market. The law opened the way to a new and unusual industry, and many men found the killing of wild horses very profitable. Besides the work is exciting and gave the business the added zest of sport.

As time went on and the business of killing these "outlaws" (as the wild horses were often termed) on the ranges assumed greater and greater proportions, stockmen found that the professional hunters were, in many cases, abusing their rights and were killing branded and shod horses. This put an end to the business, for on complaint of the stockmen the Nevada Legislature promptly repealed the law. It is estimated that 15,000 animals were killed during the time that the law was in force. This figure gave the basis for last week's story.

The report, however, had good basis of fact, for the wild horse question has grown to be as serious in the last few years as it was when the Nevada Legislature was forced to enact the old law. The United States forest service has not given orders for the killing of

a single horse because it has no right to do so. The forest officers of the Nevada National forests realize how bad conditions are, and will do anything to assist the stockmen to down this nuisance.

Any one who finally discovers an effective method to settle this problem will have done a great service for the stockmen of every state west of the Missouri river. As an old and experienced stockman, now in the employ of Uncle Sam, said of this wild horse problem: "Theoretically it seems a very simple matter to handle, but practically it is quite the reverse." On the range of many of the national forests the supervisors have been at their wits' ends for several years trying to devise a method to meet the difficulty. Apparently an entirely satisfactory method cannot be found because of the inadequate estray laws now enforced in the different states. Under the circumstances, the following plan has been recommended to meet the conditions in the national forest:

"If the presence of the horses is seriously damaging the national forest range and public sentiment favors such action, the supervisor may, upon petition of a majority of the permittees of a grazing district, allow the horses to be gathered and disposed of according to the state or territorial laws. In such cases the forest service will, upon recommendation from the supervisor, cooperate in the construction of corrals or fences for the purpose of capturing the horses.

"Forest officers may drive unpermitted horses from the national forests at any time, but if the owners of the horses are known and ownership acknowledged the owner should be allowed to adjust the matter by paying the grazing fee. If he refuses to apply for a permit, then a trespass charge should be brought against him and the case conducted according to instructions.

Unbranded horses may be handled according to the state estray laws, but forest officers can not be allowed to gather such horses for the purpose of selling them, nor can they be allowed to collect any remuneration from any person for corraling unclaimed horses. The policy of the forest service will be, therefore, to cooperate with the stockmen of the state or territorial authorities when they take the initiative in disposing of the wild horses in the national forests, but the present laws and regulations do not admit of independent action by the forest service.

The wild horse problem is only one of the many which stockmen have to contend with which the government is trying in one way or another to solve on the ranges of the national forests. Predatory animals, such as wolves, coyotes, mountain lions and wildcats, do thousands of dollars' worth of damage to stock each year in all parts of the country. On some ranges forest officers have to contend with rustlers, who sometimes succeed in stealing the great part of the stock which the predatory animals do not kill. Poisonous plants are another nuisance which gives stockmen considerable trouble in many parts of the country.

Uncle Sam has always shown a disposition to cooperate with the stockmen in combating these nuisances; in fact, he is doing better than merely meeting the stockmen half way in the work. On many of the national forest ranges for the last year rangers and guards have been assigned to the work of hunting and trapping, with the sole aim of killing off the animals that prey upon stock. The work has met with marked success, and hundreds of wolves and coyotes have succumbed to the bullets

and the poison of the hunters. Each animal killed means a decided saving to the sheep industry, for it is estimated that one wolf averages about one thousand dollars damage each year.

Forest officers are cooperating with the stock associations to step the stealing of livestock and run the rustlers out of the country. The war on poisonous plants has been carried on for more than a year by the forest service, in cooperation with the bureau of plant industry, and, while the investigations have just begun, it is already seen that their growth can be checked in many places.

If it is possible to check the wild horse nuisance as easily as the other troubles which have bothered the stock interests, both the stockmen and the forest officers will find the Western range rid of another serious drawback which helps to retard progress in the business.

Top Alleghany (Delayed)

The roads have been opened and the mail is going again after a long delay.

We have been having good weather since March came in, except an equinox storm.

Making molasses is the order of the day.

The farmers have done very little plowing yet in the neighborhood.

Lewis Simmons is putting a garden.

Howard Phillips and his mother went to Bartow one day last week.

John Kramer and wife of Danville, were called to Richland county on account of the illness of Mrs. Kramer's mother.

W. B. Freeman and John L. Spencer were in Greenbrier county last week looking real estate, but we understand they did not make a purchase.

Mrs. Samuel Syencer was visiting her mother, Mrs. Barkley, Saturday and Sunday.

Rev. Allen Calhoun preached an able and interesting sermon here Sunday.

Berlin Simmons attended the close of the Pine Grove school Friday, and reports a pleasant time.

Warwick (Delayed)

We have been having fine spring weather—good on the farms.

A. P. Gay and family were visiting friends and relatives in this part last week. They have gone to Albemarle, Virginia, where Mr. Gay purchased a farm and expects to make their future home. We are very sorry to lose such good neighbors.

Rev. Shipley preached his last sermon at Mt. Pleasant last Sunday afternoon, for this conference year; but we sincerely hope he may return and preach for us another year.

Miss Grace Poage, of Poage's Lane, has been visiting her grand mother, Mrs. P. A. Mann, for a few days.

Mrs. G. S. Weiford and J. D. Gay, who have been very sick, are improving.

E. H. Williams was looking after his interests in this part Sunday afternoon.

Miss Christelle Mann was visiting at Q. W. Poage's last week.

Pifer and Dumire Bros. have started their mill again, and expect to do a rushing business.

Pugnacious Youngster.

"I think my new baby brother is a quinine little chap," said Mabel. "When he can't get a chance to pull my hair he pulls his own, and when he can't get a chance to scratch his own back."

SOME RECOLLECTIONS

OF THE CIVIL WAR

By W. H. HANNAN

Fourth Part

The sight of our first encampment is now the town of Marlinton, the junction of two roads, the scene of considerable business activity; being the center of the lumber industry of the upper Greenbrier. A bank, a large Taney plant nearby, and many other enterprises and developments, that at that day, never entered the imagination of the most optimistic as likely ever to ever take place in these mountain regions. The old stage coach has been supplanted by the locomotive and the railroad train. Then social intercourse, or matters of business, often involved long rides in bad weather, or depend on the mails, which were only weekly.

Our first days march was from the West prong of the Greenbrier to the top of Cheat Mountain, the "White Top." When we reached the first top of Cheat we were halted, and it was proposed that as we were about to cross the county line into another county, we should give three cheers, which were promptly given to the best of our ability. We found the weather quite cold on the top of Cheat for that time of year. Our next days march was from the top of Cheat to what was known as the Hamilton House, at the foot of the mountain in Randolph county. When we reached the necking on the western slope of the mountain, some one discovered that the young elms would peel. The officers, taking note of the fact that the men were stopping for that purpose, halted the command, and we all engaged in a general "bark peeling." We were anxious to present the Colonel with a piece of bark, but he, seeing that he was likely to be "overstocked" very probably, declined all but very small piece.

RESOLUTIONS

At a meeting of the John S. Hoffman Camp U. C. V. held at Greenbank on the 21st day of March 1908, the following resolutions of respect to the memory of Captain Geo. W. Siple, who departed this life on the 16th day of February 1908, were adopted.

Resolved: That inasmuch as we have been called upon to mourn the death of one of our members, we as a camp, comrades, friends and citizens mourn his loss from our midst.

Resolved: That whilst we feel keenly the loss we have sustained in the taking of our friend and fellow citizen, we humbly submit to the will of our Heavenly Father who doeth all things well.

Resolved: That at the beginning of the late war between the States, Captain Siple gave his services to his country with the same fervor that characterized him in all the undertakings of life. After the war he served his country faithfully in two positions of public trust.

Resolved: That we sympathize deeply with his family and relatives who mourn his death, and humbly commend them to the care of a loving Father who never willingly afflicts his children.

Resolved: That a copy of these resolutions be spread upon our minutes and a copy be sent to the Pocahontas Times and to his family.

Saml. B. HANNAN
W. B. HULL
W. H. HUDSON
Committee.

As to Rattlers

Being the Reminiscences of a Nature Fakir

By John Kendrick Bangs

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"It's a mighty interesting prevision of nature," said the postmaster, "that rattlesnakes ain't abundant in states where liquor is hard to get."

I laughed.

"I didn't know there were any such states, Joe," I said.

"If you was a stranger in this here state of Maine, you'd find one of 'em right here," retorted the postmaster. "Knowin' the ropes as you do of course it ain't hard for you to find your highball at any sofa water fountain from York to Bar Harbor, but if you'd only just arrived an' was lookin' for somethin' to restore your fain'tin' spirit, findin' needles in hay-ricks 'd be like breakin' a baby's arm alongside o' gettin' it. An' seen as how whiskey is about the only known antidote against the rattler's bite, I repeats that it is a wise prevision o' nature to keep the rattlesnakes in parts o' the country where intemperance ain't frowned on by the law an' society, like New Jersey an' Arizona."

"Runs a bigger course nor rattlesnakes," Joe," roushaded the captain at this point. "There's more ceme'teries been poppylized by rum than by rattlesnakes. It's more injus'is. If you'd look around you anywhere you'd find no end o' fellers that gets the habit o' drinkin' fiery waters, but where do ye find anybody chasin' after rattlesnakes, goin' into hotels an' orderin' 'em for dinner; ringin' bells an' havin' 'em served between meals; goin' to the grocery store an' buyin' 'em by the case an' havin' 'em sent home an' kept in the cellar where they's always on tap?"

"I never thought of it in that exact light," said the postmaster.

"Well, ye'd better begin to," said the captain. "I don't set no special store by rattlesnakes. I can get along with 'em, an' I ain't got no particular call to defend 'em, but when people begins to put whiskey on a pedestal, makin' a sort of alcohol o' Fame out of it, an' at the same time condemnin' the rattlesnake as a menace to human life, an' callin' on the public to stamp him out as an enemy o' society, I sort of feel that the rattlesnake has pints that he ain't got no cause to be ashamed of. He minds his own business most o' the time. He don't invite nobody to come along an' get bit. He ain't a tempter, an' a snare, an' a pitfall for the feetsteps of the weak an' onwary, an' so I says, give him a show. There's too much prejudice against reptiles, anyhow."

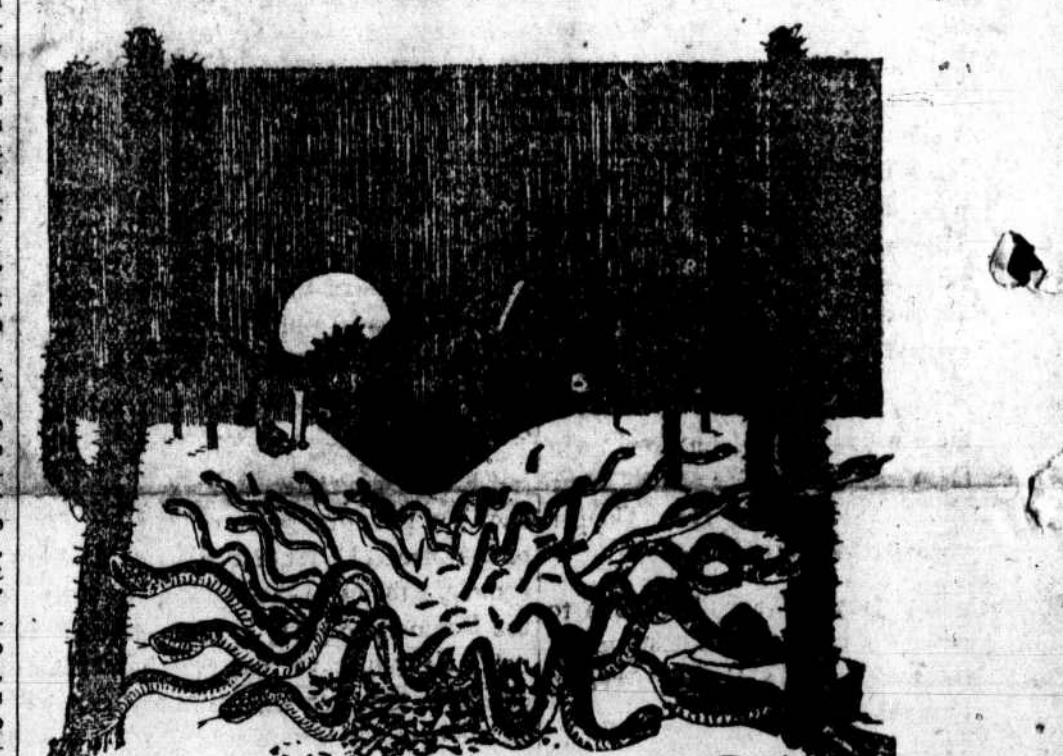
"I didn't know ye'd ever had a pet rattler, captain," said the postmaster with a sly wink at the rest of us.

"There's a whole lot you never did know, Joe," returned the captain. "You're kep' so busy readin' the postal cards that passes through your hands that you don't seem to have no time for a lib'ral education. When I was in Arizona I found a lot o' good pints about reptiles that I ain't agoin' to forget. Down 'round Tucson where I was lookin' into a salt mine some fellers I knowed wanted me to go into I come into contact with no end o' rattlers an' they didn't none of 'em do me any harm. I had an idea when I went there that the rattlesnake, like all other livin' creatures, was just as much afraid of one of his own kind that was bigger 'n he was, as you an'

lumps o' them big cactus trees they hev down there, about 16 feet up from the ground. Then when bed-time come I'd climb up the prickles, just as I would a ladder, and slide into the hammock an' go to sleep. I was safe enough up there from anything that creeps because, though snakes can climb trees as easy as a squirrel, they find the prickles on the cactus trees a little too inconvenient for 'em, but they bothered me like the dickens with the racket they kep' up underneath. Ye know all a rattlesnake asks of us human beins is to be allowed to keep warm, and when them cold Arizona nights come on, an' the sun had gone down, they used to creep along to where my campfire was burnin' low, an' toast themselves alongside of its dyin' embers. If they'd done it quietly I wouldn't ha' minded it, but somehow or other the genial glow of the campfire used to make 'em talkative, an' they'd rattle away at each other on the subjects of the day until ye couldn't tell whether it was a church sociable with all the wimmen out, or a telegraph office, ye had underneath ye. Nobody needn't never tell me that them fellers can't talk. They'd rattle questions and answers at each other like two opposin' parties at a town meetin'. Once in awhile one feller that seemed to know more 'n the rest of 'em would rattle on for seven or eight minutes without stoppin', an' the others 'd get there gasin' at the fire an' drinkin' it all in. Then some other feller who couldn't quite understand would give his tail a shake three or four times, endin' up with an intererration point, and the first feller would answer sometimes pleasantly, sometimes with considerable firmness, an' once in awhile as if he was layin' down the law more in anger than in sorrow.

"What was they talkin' about, captain?" asked Si Wotherpoon.

"I can't tell ye that my son," said



"Clicketty-licketty-lick!"

the captain. "I ain't up on reptiling. They may have been discussin' the tariff, or the iniquities of predatory wealth, or the insurance question for all I know. I never got intimate enough with any 'em to ask. All I know is that the first night I found it very interestin'. The second night it just struck me as a little noisy, an' on the third night I got tired of it, and I hollered down to them to turn out the gas and go to bed. I wanted to sleep. But they didn't pay no more attention to me than 's if I wasn't there—just rattled along until sunrise, when they'd break up an' crawl back each to his own p'ticular snout. The fourth night I put the fire out before I climbed up into the hammock, hopin' that with the chief attraction of the place gone they'd keep away an' let me go to sleep, but it didn't work. Ye see the sand of the desert stored up a hull lot of heat underneath where the fire'd been burnin', an' while they prob'ly preferred the embers, there was still enough heat left there to make the place do for a ledge meetin'."

"Then I suddenly remembered my theory about the rattler, an' I made up my mind I'd take the two of 'em up to bed with me that night an' work it on 'em. Unfortunately I was kep' out at the salt mines putty late that night an' when I got back to my claim they was all there before me, one of 'em perched up on top o' my suitcase makin' what sounded like a stumpy speech to the rest of 'em. You could almost tell what he was sayin' by the way he rattled that old tail o' his. If you can imagine a rattler sayin' 'Friends and Fellow Citizens, rise up and demand your rights from the heel of the oppressor. Strike for your alters an' your fires, an' when ye do strike see that ye strike 12, ye can get a fair idee o' what it sounded like, an' my rattlers on the inside o' the feller's platform all the time, and the audience spread around all over the place, so that I couldn't even climb up into my hammock! I tell ye it made me tired. With ninety-seven million square miles o' desert all around 'em to hold their mass meetin' in Rattlesnake Brotherhood No. 23 couldn't find no better place to squat than under my hammock, no better pulpit to do their preachin' from than that suitcase o' mine, which not only held my rattlers but my pie-jammers, my toothbrush, my coffee grinder, my can o' condensed milk and my bottle o' sars'pilla."

"You'd ought to shood 'em away," said Si Wotherpoon.

"Wake up, Si," retorted the captain. "This ain't a study o' hen life I'm Heraldin' this mornin'. Must be simply talkin' to a man of His Majesty's about a hen or ya can't rattle 'em."

let 'em, so that even their rattles couldn't work, and dropped exhausted, they began to rattle among themselves as to which was the winner, an' I thought it was time to turn over an' go to sleep again, so I outs with two rattlers. Takin' one with one hand an' th' other in th' other, I began givin' 'em the twist.

"Clicketty-licketty-licketty-lick!"

"Just like that, only faster, and more stentorian like, as they say of Bill Wiggins' voice when he makes a stumpy speech.

"At the first clicketty-lick they all jumped jest like a nervous rooster when you say booh to him. At the second they looked around uneasily as if expectin' to be attacked, and finally when I ratcheted out a click like two dozen telegraph offices tryin' to sing the 'Star Spangled Banner' all at once they made a jump for liberty that landed 'em ten yards away, an' they jumped so quick and so sudden that every blessed one o' them snakes snapped his rattles off!

"Next mornin' when I got down to breakfast I found enough rattles to fill my suitcase, an' for ten years ever had to buy any buttons to sew on our clothes. We just used them rattles as we needed 'em."

There was a silence of three or four minutes' duration.

"I didn't know you'd ever been down to Arizona, captain," said the postmaster, finally.

"Didn't ye, Joe?" said the captain.

"No," retorted the postmaster. "Kin ye prove it?"

"Yes," replied the captain. "Easy's fallin' off a log. If ye'll come up to my house some night I'll show it to ye on the map, and if that ain't enough I'll show ye the old suitcase them rattlers used to make their stumpy speeches on."

"I thought ye said them rattlers had good pints," said Si Wotherpoon.

"So they hev," said the captain. "So they hev. They don't drink whiskey, nor play cards, an' as far as I can find out they don't write magazine articles about 'Trensed Finances or Nature Fakirs."

How the King Dines.

Fancy seating yourself at dinner in a chair fitted with a weighing apparatus, keeping your eye on the index and leaving the table when this reaches a certain figure—or possibly when a bell rings like that of a typewriter when the line is complete! Must be dreadfully uncomfortable. It is a king, who, in order to reduce his obesity—King Carlos of Portugal, as told in a special cable dispatch to the Herald this mornin'—Must be simply talkin' to a man of His Majesty's